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**Book review of: J. Hindermann, Der elegische Esel: Apuleius'
Metamorphosen und Ovids Ars Amatoria, Frankfurt a.M.: Peter Lang, 2009**

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construction of his own career — has here accepted at face value Tacitus' tendentious perspective on the economy of prestige in his society. There were more paths to success than the historian would like to admit. But we do not have to accept S.'s analysis of élite society in its entirety to see that Tacitus is invested in his image as an alienated critic of the Principate — and that this might be a hard sell given his obvious political success.

The following four chapters trace the development of Tacitus' self-presentation over the course of his historiographical career. Ch. 2, on the *Agricola*, highlights that work's focus on the circulation of glory in both Rome and Britain. It argues that Tacitus diagnoses a 'crisis of representation' in Roman culture — a crisis which has lasted into the Trajanic period despite the best efforts of the new emperors — and ambitiously offers his own work as a solution.

Ch. 3 focuses on the preface to the *Histories*, analysing how it seeks to persuade the reader that historiography and politics are inextricably linked. Tacitus suggests that it is impossible to write good history under the Principate because political enslavement inevitably provokes a response that is emotional and therefore — regardless of whether it is favourable or hostile to the regime — always pernicious to good historiography. But he also hints that the *Histories* will be a unique exception, because of its author's ability to stand outside the relations of reciprocity (positive and negative) that have been the ruin of other historians.

Ch. 4, still on the *Histories*, traverses a wider range of passages, including Otho's two speeches to the Praetorians, the destruction and restoration of the Capitol, and the Jewish War. Although the readings are united by an interest in failures of signification — particularly of the signifying power of the city of Rome — the arguments are more diffuse than in other chapters and less obviously connected to the agenda of the book as a whole. Its most important claim is that Tacitus represents the Principate as entailing the loss of the meaning written into Rome's urban fabric and suggests that this meaning can only be recuperated within the alienated perspective provided by his own text.

Ch. 5 on *Ann.* 4.32–8 (the 'second preface', the prosecution of Cremutius Cordus and Tiberius' speech on the rejection of divine honours) is a return to strength. S. argues that this programmatic triptych plays a pivotal rôle in giving the work the 'impression of political consequence' and its 'status as an endangered book'. He makes much of Tacitus' failure to articulate the precise utility of historiography under the Principate (4.33.2), suggesting that this hints that the real purpose of the work is unspeakable, and so makes it appear far more politically significant and dangerous to its author than it can ever have been. He also argues that Tacitus has both exaggerated the significance of Cremutius' historical works for his downfall and given Cremutius a surprisingly guarded (and so Tacitean) final speech in order to make him paradigmatic of the dangers of historical writing. He presses readers not to take these intimations of the regime's hostility at face value, but rather to see them as a rhetorical device by which the successful senator seeks to create an impression of political independence.

This is a long book. Its 300-odd pages offer many interesting and often provocative readings of foundational passages with which every reader of Tacitus must grapple. Yet this reader could not help feeling that it would have been even stronger had it focused more narrowly on the 'alienation effect', for that is where its real pay-off lies. This book will make all readers of Tacitus look more closely — and more critically — at the strategies by which the historian constructs himself as a subversive critic of power.

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J. HINDERMANN, *DER ELEGISCHE ESEL: APULEIUS' METAMORPHOSEN UND OVIDS ARS AMATORIA* (Studien zur Klassischen Philologie 162). Frankfurt a.M.: Peter Lang, 2009. Pp. 229. ISBN 9783631592304. £38.50.

Ovid's influence on Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* has been variously studied before, but Ovidian love elegy has not been a particular focus of attention. J. Hindermann's Basel PhD-thesis fills this gap. It concentrates on Apuleius' reception of the *Ars amatoria* and makes occasional remarks on the *Amores*. H.'s guiding hypothesis is that Apuleius models his accounts of erotic relationships on elegiac, particularly Ovidian patterns. This concerns first and foremost the prominent relationship between Lucius and the slave-girl Photis, described in *Met.* 2 and 3. But H. also has something to

say about other erotic or eroticized relationships in the novel, most significantly those between Socrates and the witch Meroe in Book 1 and Lucius and Isis in Book 11. As a basis for further analysis, H. first compares Apuleius' Photis episode with its equivalent in the Greek *Onos*. Although the *Onos* is only an epitome of Apuleius' direct model, the Greek *Metamorphoseis* by so-called Loukios of Patras, H. is reasonably successful in arguing that Apuleius brings in significant erotic, and specifically elegiac, nuances.

The following main part of the study is dedicated to a detailed comparison between structure and motifs of the *Ars amatoria* on the one hand and potential correspondences in the *Metamorphoses* on the other. H. bases her readings on a general analogue (41): the Ovidian student of love is comparable to the Apuleian student of magic; both are young men, ardent to experience a yet unknown higher power; they submit themselves to a 'teacher' and set out on a 'journey into new realms'; they neglect family and *negotium* to devote themselves to an arduous *otium*; they keep away from respectable women and get involved with shady girls. Readers who think that these parallels are vague will be disappointed by the bulk of H.'s argument, especially where she claims that Apuleius himself was a pupil of Ovid and followed the latter's instructions step by step: from the *inventio* of the object of love or magic to the eventual *captatio* of the *puella* (42–100). In her discussion of motifs (appearance of the *puella*, *militia amoris*, *servitium amoris*), H. is on firmer ground and identifies a number of attractive Ovidian contexts which could have inspired Apuleius, for example, to Lucius' preference for a negligent 'non-hairstyle' (113–23) or to his '*servitium amoris* light' (158), in contrast to the self-destructive *servitium amoris* evinced by Socrates in his relationship with Meroe.

The most intriguing part of H.'s study, however, is its concluding chapter on Isis as elegiac *puella* (185–203). Here, H. adds to the comic readings of *Met.* 11, which, as an alternative to the more traditional religious readings, have enjoyed considerable success over the last decades. H. argues that Lucius at the end of the *Metamorphoses* is presented as a dupe because he ends up with a stricter *domina* than Photis ever was. H. brilliantly observes that the ideas of liberating slavery and of military service (cf. especially *Met.* 11.15) are not attested in Isiac contexts before Apuleius, but constitute stock motifs of Roman elegy. Similarly, the elegiac motifs of *paraclausithyron* and *foedus aeternum* may be relevant to Lucius' attempt to draw closer to Isis (in the preparations for his first initiation, including two veritable door scenes in *Met.* 11.22.7 and 11.23.4) and to the exclusivity of his veneration of the goddess. But here and generally it seems problematic that in the last chapters of the novel Isis is eclipsed by her husband Osiris (in this light Isis resembles an honourable *matrona* rather than a disreputable *puella* — it is a pity that H. does not compare her approach with earlier readings of Isis as Lucius' legitimate wife, betrothed to him in a sort of *hieros gamos*, cf., e.g., D. Lateiner in *CJ* 95 (2000), 326–7; J. McNamara in *AncNarr* 3 (2003), 108–9 and 122–7). Lucius' second initiation is clearly into the cult of Osiris (*Met.* 11.27.2), and in his third and final initiation no other god than Osiris appears in the context (*Met.* 11.30.3–4). H. keeps silent about this. Her only brief (and recherché) attempt to integrate Osiris into her picture comes when reading Isis as a greedy elegiac *puella* who makes Lucius pay large sums for his initiations. Osiris would put up with Lucius just as the husband described by Ovid (*Am.* 3.4.45–8), who accepts his wife's male friends not least because they bring many gifts.

H.'s study is clear and informed, but suffers from an excess of detail in the main part (e.g. in the unnecessary full exploration of Ovidian contexts for their own sake) and from the single-minded conviction that Ovid's love elegy is *the* key to Apuleius' representation of erotic relationships. To the mind of this reviewer the specific parallels with the *Ars amatoria* are not numerous and convincing enough to recommend this text as a consistent and thoroughgoing 'code' for elegiac themes and motifs in the *Metamorphoses*. It might have been more fruitful to examine these aspects against the broader background of Roman elegy (in fact many of H.'s results hold up without Ovid) and in their shifting interplay with the rich literary texture that is the *Metamorphoses* (cf. in this direction now A. G. Mathis in W. Riess (ed.), *Paideia at Play* (2008), 195–214). This said, it is clear that readers are free to use H.'s often remarkable observations outside the rigid framework in which they are presented. Unfortunately, the lack of an index does not help here and will no doubt impede an easy and widespread reception of H.'s work.

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